



Department of Justice

United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott
Eastern District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, May 1, 2008
www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae
Docket #:

CONTACT: Lauren Horwood
PHONE: (916) 554-2706
lauren.horwood@usdoj.gov

FORMER FEDERAL PENITENTIARY CORRECTIONS LIEUTENANT INDICTED FOR CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATION

FRESNO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor Scott announced today that a federal grand jury indicted ERIC McEACHERN, 33, of Tehachapi with violating the civil rights of an inmate who was in custody and obstructing justice in the resulting investigation.

McEACHERN was a corrections lieutenant who worked at the United States Penitentiary in Atwater, California at the time of the alleged offense. The indictment specifically charges McEACHERN with one felony count of deprivation of rights under color of law and one felony count of falsifying records in a federal investigation.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Kevin Rooney, Special Litigation Counsel Gerard V. Hogan, and Trial Attorney Josh Mahan of the Criminal Section of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, who are prosecuting the case, McEACHERN, while on official duty at the prison and without any justification, assaulted an inmate with a flashlight.

Additionally, the indictment alleges that while attempting to obstruct the investigation into the incident, McEACHERN falsely stated in a memorandum to a superior that he saw the inmate ram his own head into a wall.

If convicted of the civil rights charge, McEACHERN faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and fines of \$250,000. He faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and fines of \$250,000 if convicted of the obstruction of justice charge. The actual sentence, however,

will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

#####